

Six Months Aint No Sentence  
2015  
Jim Leftwich

Book 139

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11.04.2015

No matter how timeless "Like a Rolling Stone" might turn out to be, what happened over the two days of recording sessions makes it clear that had circumstances been even slightly different — different people present, a different mood in the studio, different weather in the streets outside, a different headline in the morning paper — the song might never have entered time at all, or interrupted it. "I told all the musicians, you quit playing, you're gone," Bob Johnston says of the sessions that followed. "You quit playing, you're never going to hear that song again. Dylan would start a song — they'd be a third of the way through, and someone says, Waal, I didn't git that. The bass stops, or the piano player. Dylan would forget about that song and you'd never hear it again." "Like a Rolling Stone" is a triumph of craft, inspiration, will, and intent; regardless of all those things, it was also an accident. Listening now, you hear most of all how much the song resists the musicians and the singer. Except on a single take, when they went past the song and made their performance into an event that down the years would always begin again from its first bar, they are so far from the song and from each other it's easy enough to imagine Bob Dylan giving up on the song, no doubt taking phrases here and there and putting them into another song somewhere down the line but never bothering with that thing called "Like a Rolling Stone" again. Following the sessions as they happened, it can in moments be easier to imagine that than to believe that the record was actually made — that, circling around the song like hunters surrounding an animal that has escaped them a dozen times, they caught it. That is what makes an event, after all: it can only happen once. Once it has happened, it will seem inevitable. But all the good reasons in the world can't make it happen.

From Like a Rolling Stone: Bob Dylan at the Crossroads by Greil Marcus.

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Homeophonic Meetings with Joyce Mansour

1.

puddle of furry suns, clues  
toe the crescent seep

2.

some meals are veiled.  
they sleep on sofas  
like serfs, like serifs,  
like commas in a coma.

3.  
cart-nose, the basted demons!  
jamboree,  
contrails,  
ceilings and Japanese rivers!

avenue of irregular lungs,  
where we boil the scented dents....

5.  
our comments desire the double faun

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conjuring raw disruption public identities  
recast essays three orange lightning in medias res.

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Posted on April 19, 2015  
by Ken Wachsberger

So what was the underground press?

The underground press was the independent, noncorporate, antiwar alternative to the corporate press of the Civil Rights and Vietnam eras. The traditional history of the underground press focuses on the Los Angeles Free Press, which was founded in 1964, as being the first underground paper of what was known as the counterculture. It might have been.

But in my vision and based on my work, I've expanded the term to include the papers of the liberation movements, whose roots often go back earlier. Major gay and lesbian papers came

out of the fifties: ONE, Mattachine Review, The Ladder. The first lesbian paper of our era, Vice Versa, goes back even further, to 1947. Important black papers also pre-dated the Free Press. The Student Voice, the paper of SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), began publishing in 1960. Freedomways, founded by W.E.B. Du Bois and others, began the next year. Paul Robeson founded his paper, Freedom, during the Korean War.

All of these papers already are or will be, by the way, in Reveal Digital's digital collection.

But these papers were sporadic. After the Free Press, and thanks to the advanced technology of offset printing, underground papers in tabloid format focusing on the antiwar movement and the emerging counterculture and its related liberation movements flourished. They were found everywhere you looked: on campus and off, in urban, suburban, rural, ghetto, barrio, and other communities in every state of the Union and in countries around the world. They represented the gay, lesbian, feminist, black, Native American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Asian American, prisoners' rights, military, New Age, socialist, anarchist, psychedelic, high school, senior citizen, rank and file, Southern consciousness, and other alternative voices of the day. They were found in every branch of the military—over 900 GI underground papers—and their stories are represented in Voices from the Underground. They spoke to their own unique audiences. But they were united against the war.



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### Peter Schwenger

Asemic writing is an “outside” that evokes an “inside” —it is drawn lines that look like language, and thus seem capable of revealing more than the lines themselves. Yet if writing is lines that hold within them the power of language, we must admit that language too is an “outside.” Both writing and language are outsides that evoke an “inside” that is meaning. While we distinguish asemic writing from writing that means —and means through language—language and meaning cannot be equated, for language is only the instrument that conveys meaning. If it isn’t language, then, what is meaning? It must be something like an emotionally-laden internal

movement or shape. Meaning's most accurate equivalent is then abstract –is in fact something like the movements of asemic writing. Consequently, asemic writing might be the purest expression of writing's impossible aim, and the paradoxes that must always accompany it.



Western English and Writing Studies  
November 12, 2012

Peter Schwenger (Resident Fellow, Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism) presents:  
"Asemic Writing: Backwards into the Future"

Respondents: Luke Arnott (PhD candidate, Media Studies) & Bernd Frohmann (Professor Emeritus, FIMS)

Friday 16 November, 1:30 -- 3:30pm, MC-17

#### Abstract:

In one of his most-often quoted observations, McLuhan wrote: "We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future." This phenomenon of the rear-view mirror is currently being exemplified in an unprecedented outpouring of work that has been christened "asemic writing." Asemic is derived from the Greek σῆμα (sēma), "sign," adapted by linguists for the term seme, the smallest unit of meaning recognized in semantics. Adding the prefix *a*, "without," gives us a word that signifies "without meaning" –but, it is important to note, not without signs. The hundreds of versions of asemic writing now being circulated through blogs and small presses have the look of script, but abstracted so that we do not look through writing to the meaning that it promises to convey but at the phenomenon of writing itself, whose strangeness has been covered over by habit and a preoccupation with what is being communicated. However, as Vilem Flusser observes, "If we draw off the cover of habit and more than habit, which renders writing an obvious gesture, taken at face value, it becomes a gesture of such complexity that it defies description." It is the purpose of asemic artists to shatter our habitual perception of writing; and they do this at exactly the point in time when, as Flusser argues, we are on the verge of leaving behind alphabetic writing and the modes of thought that are associated with it. Writing may linger by virtue of habit and nostalgia, but essentially, Flusser

says, "Writing can continue only with the goal of illuminating the alphabet, describing writing." This is what asemic writing is now doing, with a last glance into the rear-view mirror.



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11.05.2015

after (long after)  
Eliane Papai

1.  
is drama discovered  
merely found  
mysterious search

tracing the unknown

through quotation  
to speak  
in pointless rigor

2.

is drama discovered  
merely found  
mysterious search

tracing the unknown

through quotation  
to speak  
in pointless delirium

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Vali Myers was

1.

brave charm  
beautiful shaman

work that  
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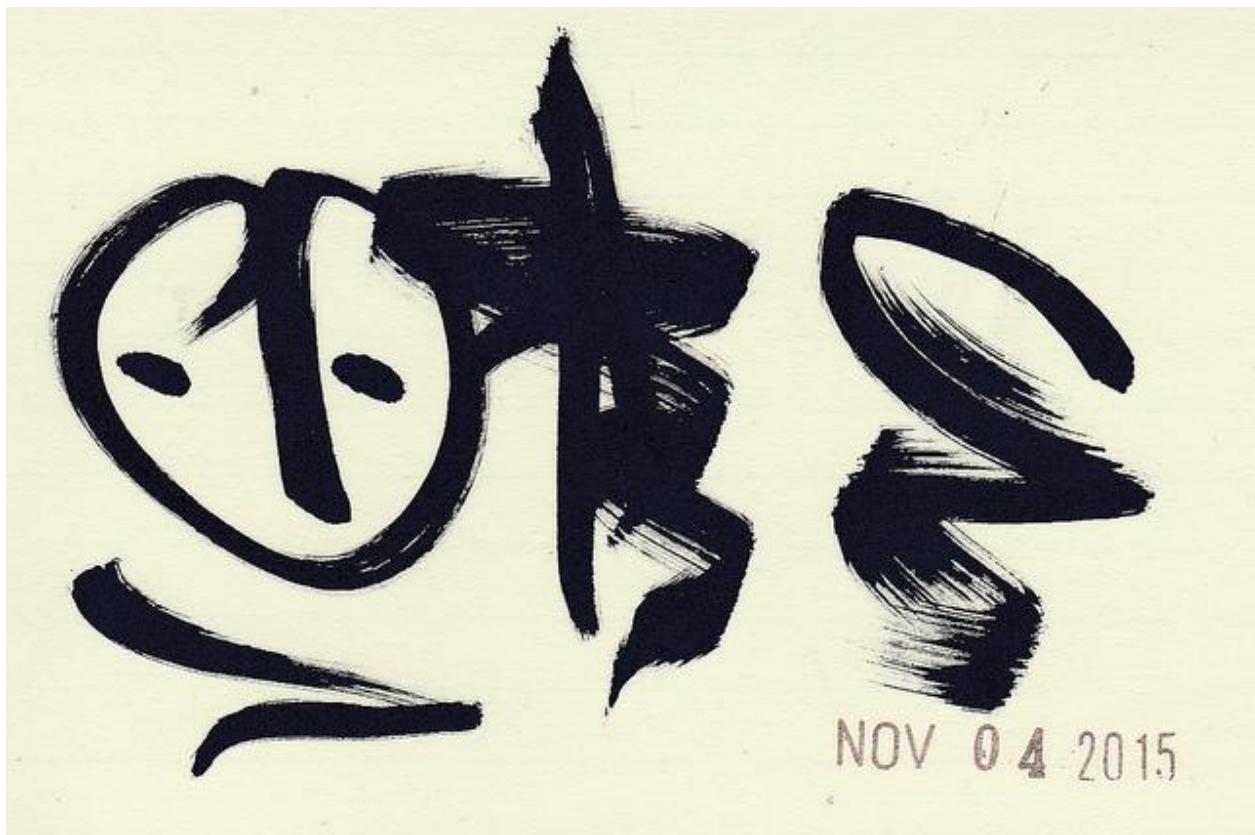
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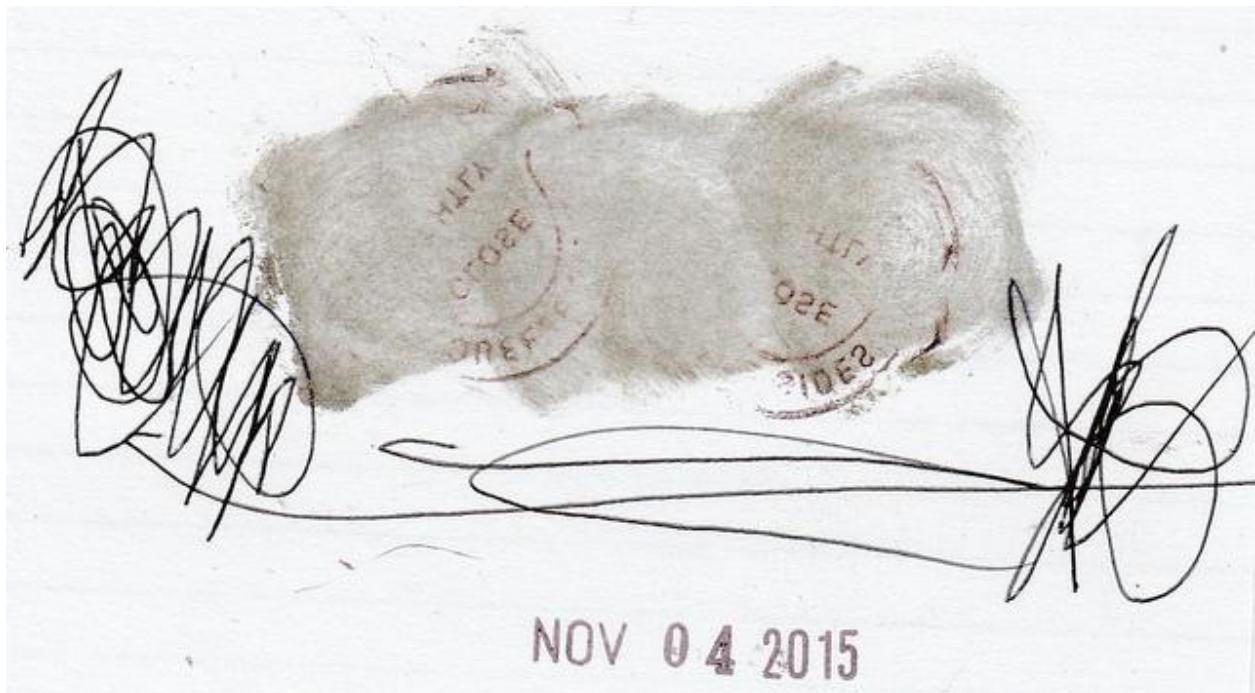
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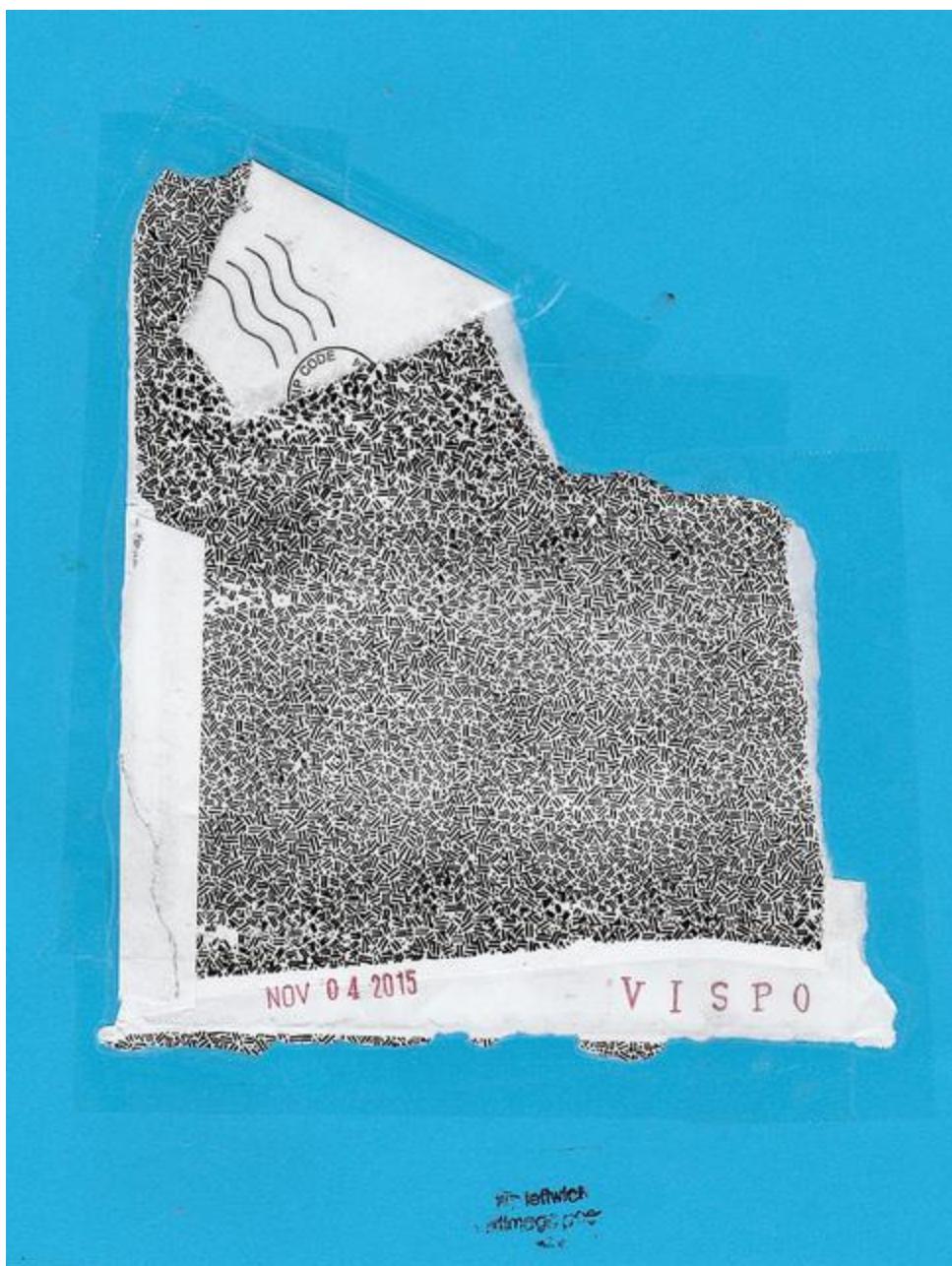
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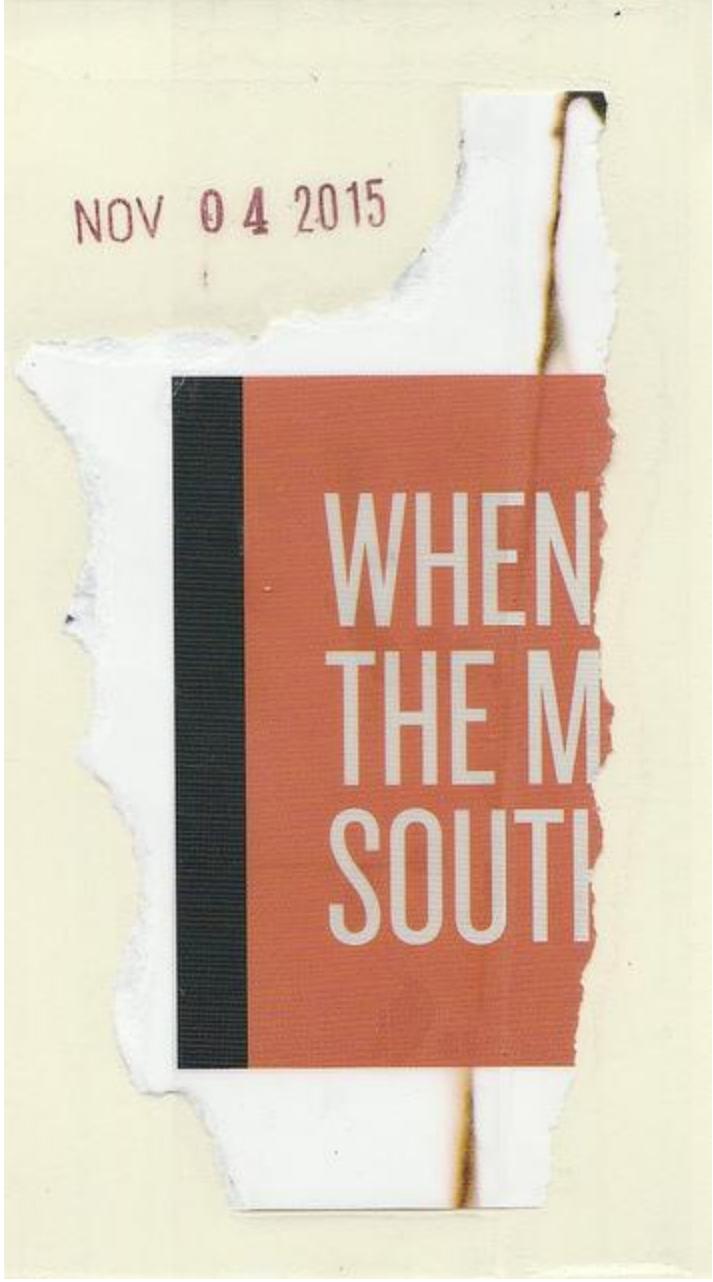


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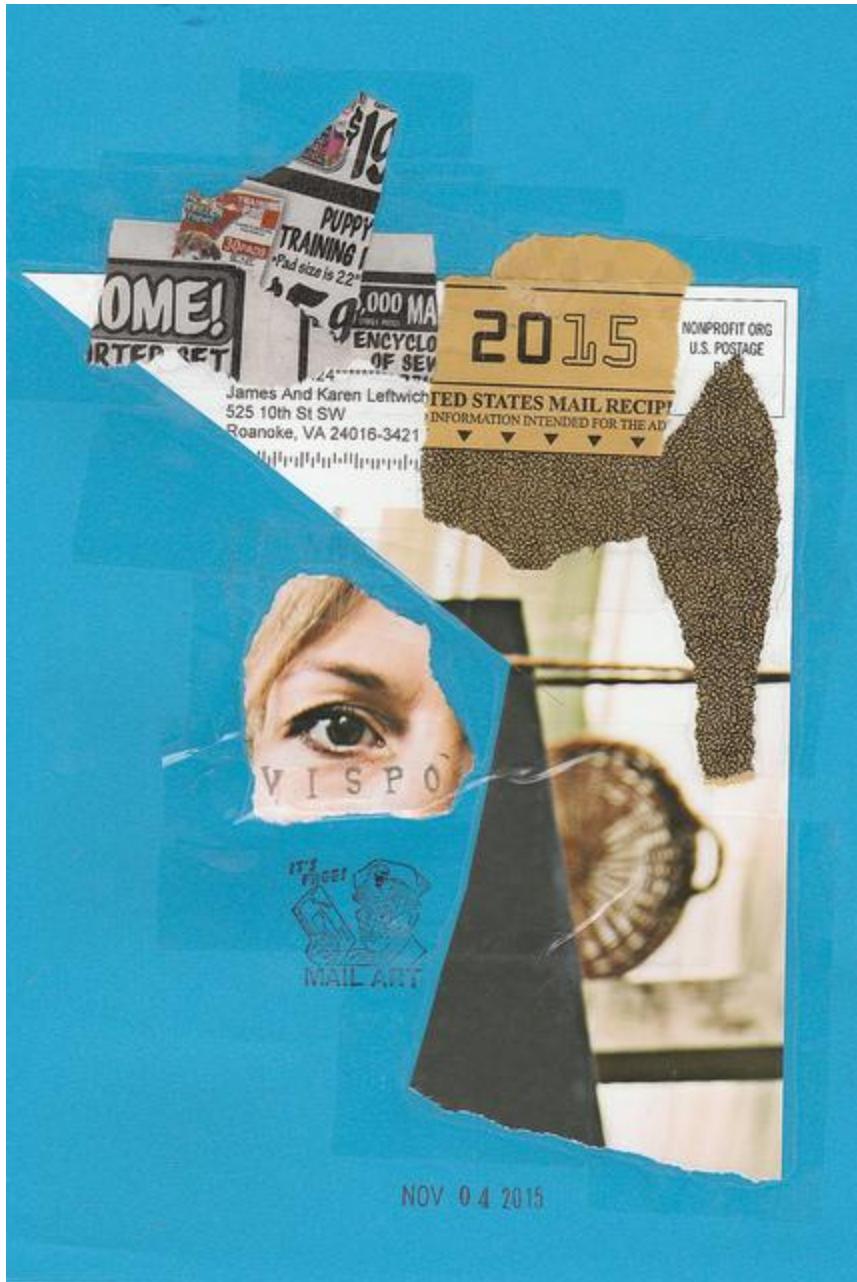
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The empire of walls is infinite. --Georges Henein, 1938

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The main task in Egypt was to bring to the Arabic language innovation that had the power to liberate it from the tyranny of traditional Koranic structure. An innovation that must, as the early poetical products of surrealism had done to the French language, decipher the hieroglyphics of prefigured patterns of expression, in which the obstacle (i.e. the traditional Aristotelian distrust of invention and imagination) was crystallized. (El Janabi, Abdel Kader. *The Nile of Surrealism: Surrealist Activities in Egypt, 1936– 1952*. Paris: Arabie sur Seine, 1991.)

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Michael Richardson

The Foolishness of Living: Georges Henein Between Worlds

Of course, Henein also saw fascism as the principal enemy, but he could not detach it from a more generalized evil that he located within European culture as well as within the human sensibility itself. It was not for him a matter of the restoration of values or even the creation of new ones; it was rather a question of determining the nature of the cancer of which fascism was only the most virulent and manifest form. We can see this in Henein's major statement about the war, his pamphlet *Prestige of Terror*, written in white heat in its immediate aftermath, in the days following the Japanese surrender, and published on 17 August 1945. This neglected document, one of the most extraordinarily far-sighted of the time, refuses to see any cause for celebration in the allied victory. Quite the contrary: this victory had merely concretized what fascism had initially put in place, and Saint George might even prove to be worse than the dragon he had conquered: "The values presiding over our conception of life and which spare us here and there the islands of hope and intervals of dignity, are quite methodically devastated by the events in which, to cap it all, we are invited to observe our victory, to welcome the eternal destruction of a dragon that is always reborn" (*Œuvres* 476). This was made tangible by the decision taken to drop atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, something Henein saw as the culmination of a progressive dehumanization that began when Italian aviators used mustard gas in the campaign in Ethiopia, was continued by the bombing of Guernica in Spain and by the Blitz inflicted upon Britain, but was then taken up in response by the saturation bombing by the allies of German and Japanese cities: "we are currently witnessing," Henein argued, "a penetration of Hitlerian political behavior into the ranks of democracy" (*Œuvres* 481). This conferred upon states the 'right to terror', making them criminally implicated in the very terror which they may initially have thought they were acting against. In other words, the State itself had become a terrorist, something we might reflect upon more in viewing the history of the world in the intervening years and ponder whether it has been 'terrorism,' in one form or another, rather than 'totalitarianism' as such, that has been the dominant weapon of repression by regimes since the Second World War, something making any claim to 'democracy' hollow. What is most remarkable about this perception is that Henein was not arguing from any humanist perspective. It was not the incredible suffering and loss of life that these actions wrought on civilian

populations that Henein saw as being most criminal. Rather it was the mentality that had made the actions conceivable in the first place, a mentality that went beyond even the perception that 'the end justifies the means' to enter a domain in which the means themselves became their own justification, in and beyond whatever consequences they might have for humanity itself. In this respect Henein here anticipates some of the arguments that would later be developed by Hannah Arendt, and even more specifically by Giorgio Agamben, about the ways in which totalitarianism has increasingly come to infect democracy. Indeed, Henein explicitly tells us that with Hiroshima the modern State has become a terrorist State and so has abrogated any of the moral legitimacy it formerly had to act against acts of terrorism directed towards it.



The last resource of contemporary man is not to say who he is. --Georges Henein, from L'Esprit frappeur (published 1980, written in the 50s & 60s)

Excessive Bodies, Shifting Subjects and Voice in the Poetry of Joyce Mansour

Victoria Carruthers

... ambivalence towards the feminine subject, and towards the slippery issue of subjectivity, becomes a common device used by Mansour, particularly in her poetry, to resist developing a 'voice' that espouses a single, consistent identity.



Introduction to AKASEGAWA GENPEI's "tHe oBJet After stAlin"

pedro erber

Art as Objet

The French word *objet*, phonetically transposed from André Breton's vocabulary into Japanese as *obuje* (オブジエ), was frequently used in postwar Japanese art in reference to object-based artworks. Its earliest uses date from the late 1930s, when the poet and critic Takiguchi Shūzō

is credited with introducing the term in two articles published in 1938 in the Japanese photography journal Photo Times. Transposed directly from the context of French Surrealism, the word objet was inserted into the Japanese artistic vocabulary stripped of its ordinary meaning of “object,” both as that which is perceived by a subject and as a thing we use or encounter in everyday life. The Japanese term obuje is thus deprived of the ambiguity inherent to its usage in the French original; it is defined as “a method of contemporary art after Dadaism and Surrealism,” which consists in the act of “isolating a ready-made article (kiseihin) or natural thing (shizen-butsu) from its original function and place, and presenting it as it is as an independent work (sakuhin), thus attributing to it a symbolic, illusionary meaning different from its everyday meaning.” In this way, it can be said that the transposition of the term objet into Japanese performs an operation similar to the method of objet art itself, in that it isolates the term from its everyday usage and gives it the almost magical meaning conferred on it by Surrealism. In the early 1960s, when avant-garde painters transitioned into creating three-dimensional, object-based art, the term objet fit perfectly the need for a conceptual understanding and genealogy of their new experiments.



In a cheeky reference to the Stalinist doctrine of Socialist Realism, Akasegawa referred to his meticulous magnified reproduction of the 1,000-yen note as “capitalist realism”: “Magnifying glass in hand, I performed a precise analysis of the bill and copied it on a panel at two hundred times its size. The picture, which I copied while remaining emotionally aloof from the task, was shit realism—not socialist but capitalist realism. It was not the design on the flag to be planted at the end of the quest, but a map of the road we are presently walking.”



11.06.2015

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experimental writing in the southlands  
LAURA CARTER

b. What do you think about the concept of the avant-garde in the southern US?

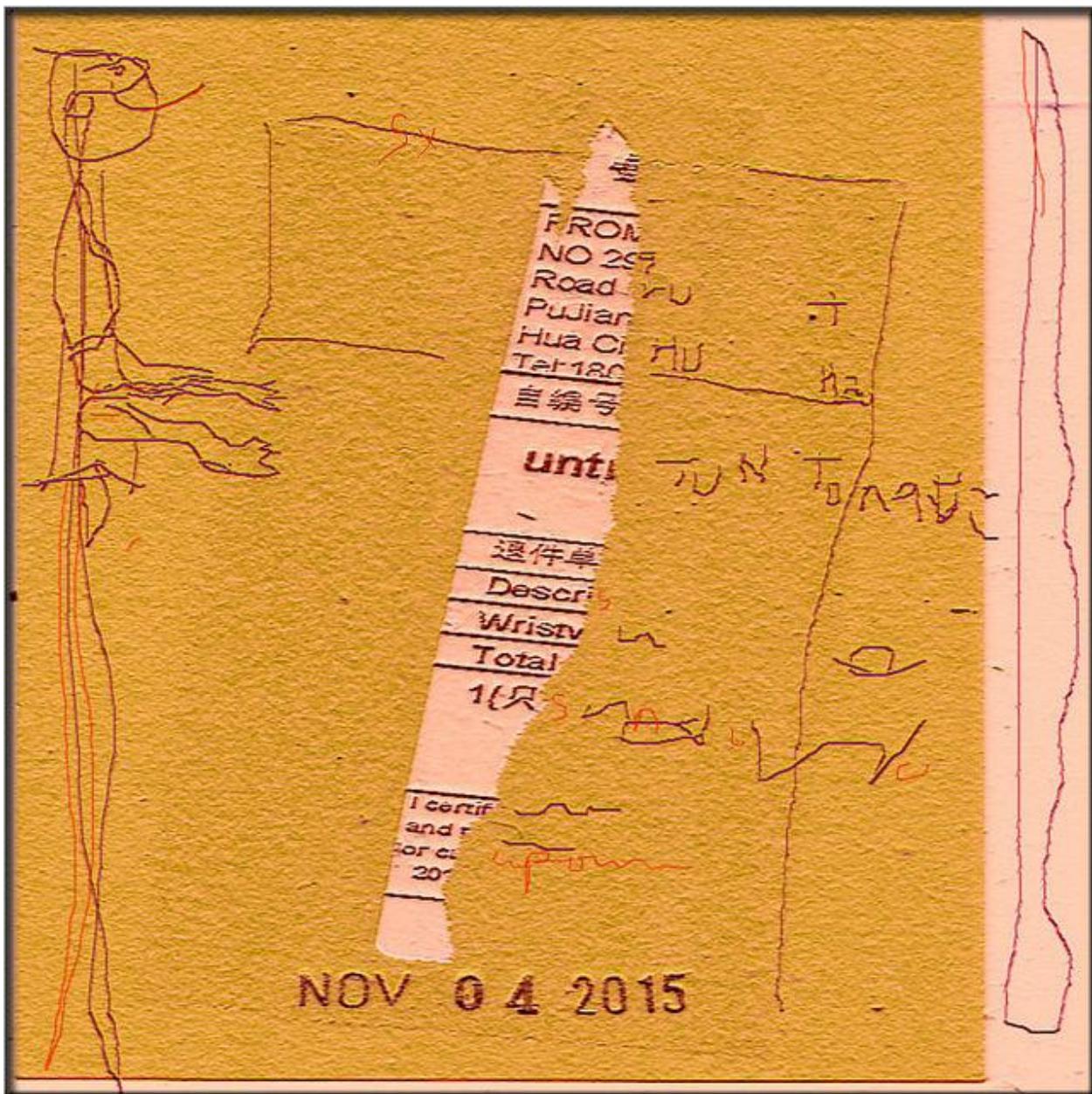
[Bill Lavender] The exact same as I think about it in the Northern US. The avant-garde, I'm afraid, is now dead as a signifier of any real cultural phenomena. It had a good run--it had real meaning for the Modernists, for the Beats, for Black Mountain, for Dada and Surrealism and Cubism and Abstract Expressionism---but the Language Poets, I think, succeeded in draining the last bit of significance from the term, so that it now means nothing more than any other -ism. It's nothing but another genre to conform to. There is nothing going on right now anywhere in literature that could even remotely be construed as a herald of new ways of seeing and thinking. No one really even wants to do such a thing. This might or might not be such a terrible thing. The notion of an avant-garde assumes a certain artistic status-quo, an establishment that is being left behind, and I think the avant-garde has lost its meaning because this establishment no longer exists. The worlds of publishing, art, film, and drama are now so prolific and various that it's almost impossible to do something that doesn't fit in a generic structure. I never hear anything, these days, I haven't heard before. Indeed, the only "avant-garde" thing I can think of to do, in this particular moment of history, is to be quiet.

But this is only half your question, the other half being that modifier, "southern." As you know, I edited, back in 2003, Another South: Experimental Writing in the South. This was a collection of avant-garde poetry being written in the South at that time, and I proposed the project to University of Alabama's Modern and Contemporary Poetics series with the specific intent of defying a certain prejudice against the southern US, a prejudice that saw the South as a cartoon of itself, a Gone with the Wind caricature that was laughably inaccurate yet seldom questioned. The very fact that you ask the question (I mean, who would think to ask about a northern or western avant-garde? Those regions don't seem to require a modifier; they are assumed in the term itself...) says it all.

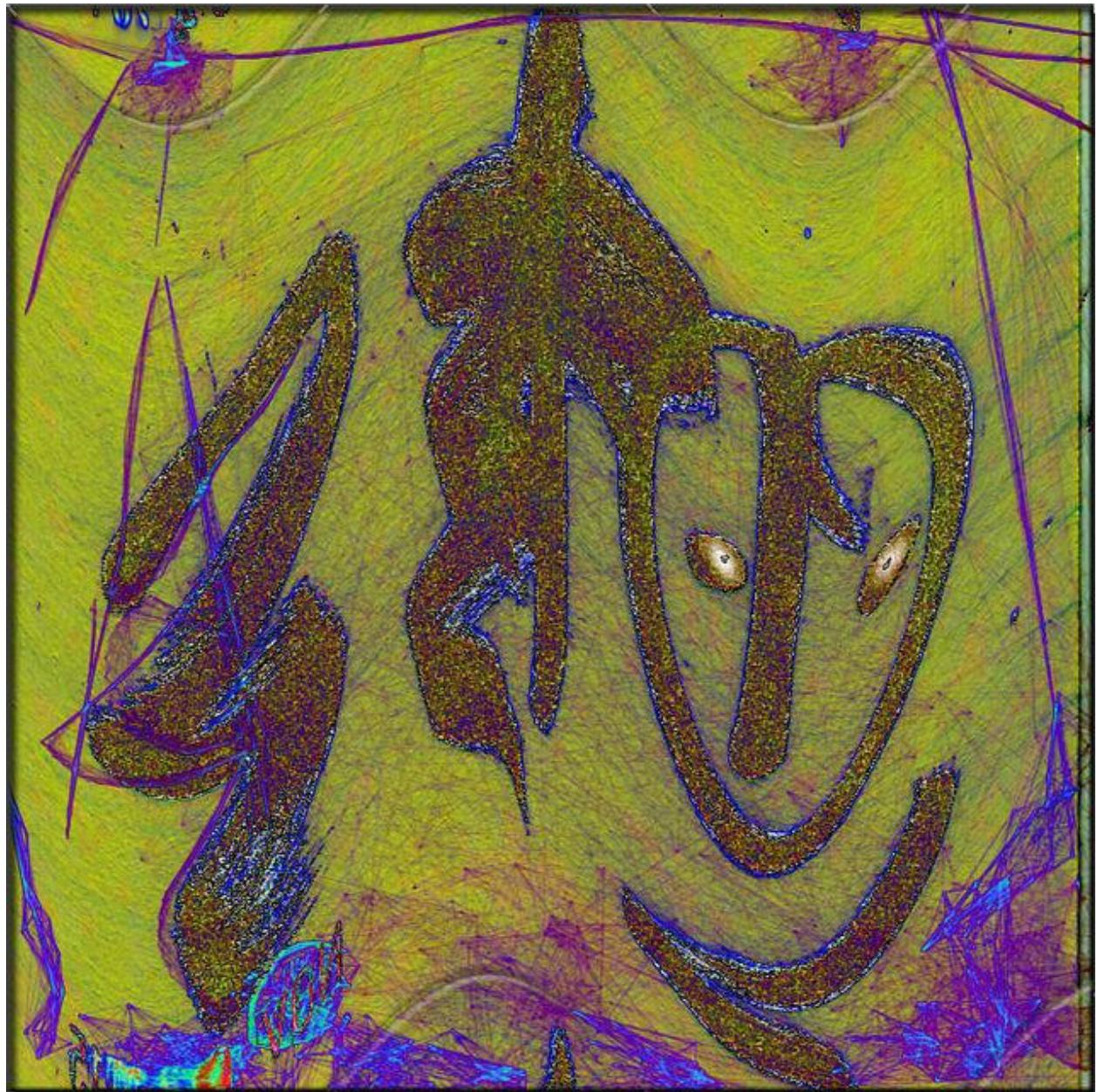
What's involved here is the very same bias that Zizek speaks of in "The Subject Supposed to Loot and Rape," his article on the national perception of New Orleans in the wake of Katrina. Or, as Deleuze put it, "If you're trapped in the dream of the Other, you're fucked." We in the South have been trapped in some New Yorker's dream for some time now. The stereotype has actually gotten worse, I think, in recent times, as the cultural hegemony of New York and California have been eroding and they scramble to bolster the pretense that they still matter.



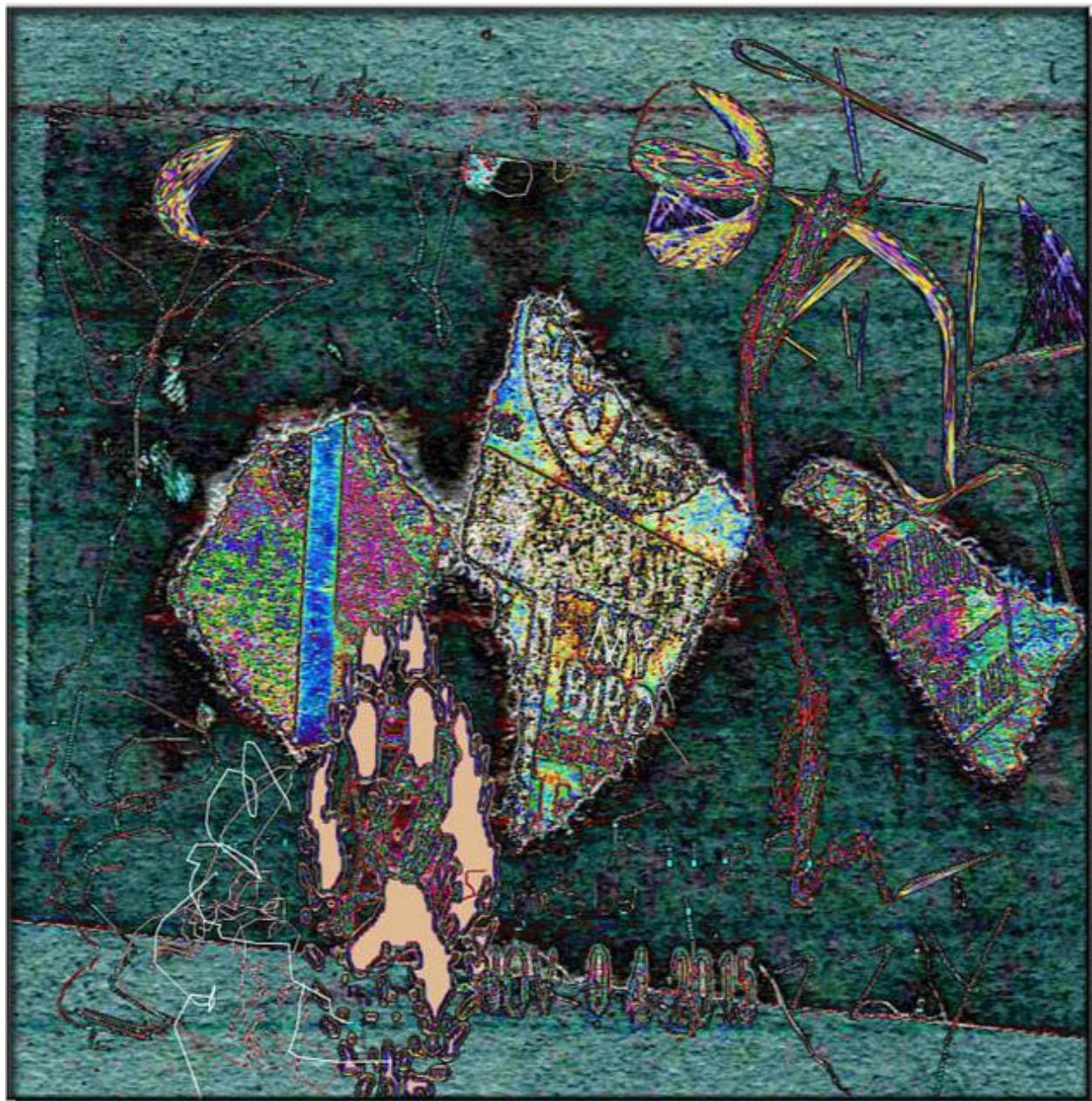
11.07.2015



NO 29 Road. 02 oR9aN. ..JL bbb



The Eyes of Asemia. Eythes ofe iAsem. Leftwich & Beamer



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Lanny Quarles

5 hrs

here is a trashpo book from 2004?

thanks, it's free trash

TRASHPO VOL.1 by Lanny Quarles (eBook) - Lulu

Buy TRASHPO VOL.1 by Lanny Quarles (eBook) online at Lulu. Visit the Lulu Marketplace for product details, ratings, and reviews.

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Like Comment Share

Seen by 24

You, John M. Bennett, Michael Dec and Erik Blagsvedt like this.

#### Comments

De Villo Sloan Thanks Lanny Quarles. The influence of this work on the current Trashpo movement has been discussed elsewhere. For one thing, it is possible you were the first to use the term Trashpo?

Like · Reply · 1 · 5 hrs

John M. Bennett Downloading now!

Like · Reply · 1 · 5 hrs

Lanny Quarles I think I was influenced to do this work and call it this from Jim Leftwich!

Like · Reply · 1 · 5 hrs

De Villo Sloan I was able to trace Trashpo back to pieces done by Jim Leftwich in 2005. But I kept turning up the Lannie Quarles work as well. The trashpoets should look at Lannie's work in addition to Jim's. That's my sense of it.

Unlike · Reply · 1 · 3 hrs

Write a reply...

John M. Bennett Excellent! Is there a vol. 2? 3? 4? etc?

Like · Reply · 1 · 5 hrs

John M. Bennett Excellent - is there a vol 2? 3? 4? etc?

Like · Reply · 1 · 5 hrs

Lanny Quarles maybe i will look. there's definitely more trash like this in my collection!! smile emoticon

Like · Reply · 5 hrs

John M. Bennett trash is the matrix of almost all collections, the true World Mother, origin of the universe, etc

Unlike · Reply · 1 · 5 hrs

Jim Leftwich as i recall there was a lot of trashpo at the chickenscratch site, but i don't remember any of us calling it trashpo. the first time i remember using the term "trashpo" was in late 2005, when we were packing and cleaning up the house in preparation for moving from charlottesville to roanoke (october of 2005).

Like · Reply · 3 hrs

De Villo Sloan Trashpo by Jim Leftwich became better known when it appeared on Fluxlist Europe (August 2007).<http://fluxlisteurope.blogspot.com/2007/08/trashpo.html>

trashpo | Fluxlist Europe

FLUXLISTEUROPE.BLOGSPOT.COM

Like · Reply · 2 hrs

De Villo Sloan Trashpo by Lannie Quarles follows a different trajectory, IMHO. But people should look into it.

Like · Reply · 2 hrs

Jim Leftwich i think the word "trashpo" was inevitable for those of us who were already making various kinds of vispo and collage. at some point we were going to make text/image collages out of trash, and the word "trashpo" would be obvious and irresistible.

Like · Reply · 2 · 2 hrs

De Villo Sloan Let us not forget that it was Diane Keys' work that launched this current iteration. Here is one of the pieces from 2009 that introduced a lot of new people to Trashpo.

<http://iuoma-network.ning.com/photo/collage1-2?context=user>

IUOMA-NETWORK.NING.COM

Unlike · Reply · 1 · 2 mins

For more information about the study, please contact Dr. John Smith at (555) 123-4567 or via email at [john.smith@researchinstitute.org](mailto:john.smith@researchinstitute.org).

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11.08.2015

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underwater discarded binge chairs  
zeal paragraphs grain traffic

patterns archways plunged outings activating  
red luminous. taper conveys  
where graph behemoth plant newspaper  
gravity clandestine wheat from moose  
park blue fertilizer gentle deflate  
Hawaii nameless. fungal sunlight  
commercial distinguish, swaths  
fabricated existed sinking gauge  
dictionary mysterious geological orchestra  
spotlight corner historic/holistic  
wrap dry food vast rivers diverting.

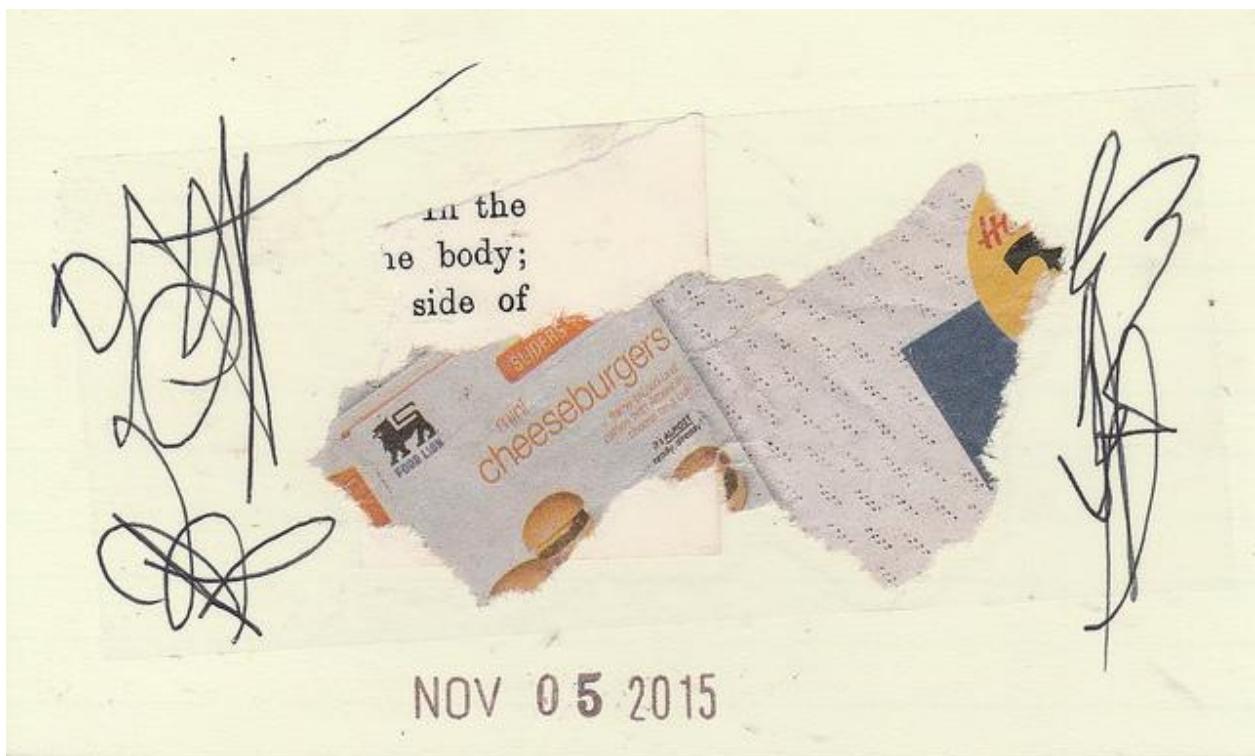


Hanover without



NOV 05 2015

no one is a warehouse



NOV 05 2015

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11.11.2015

## Observations

Inbox

x

Tomislav Butkovic

Nov 2 (9 days ago)

to me

I found the Financial Times equivalent of Croatia's wealthy tourist industry: <http://total-croatia-news.com>

Meaning its were the wealthy go to socialize about current situations.

Been reading more news over there. Planning on going in december. Will see people from my last trip and family. Kind of unfortunate but not surprising in this world, coincidentally my sister is having surgery removing cancer in her kidney and arteries.

been reading about the flow of migrants traveling through ex-Yu to get to Germany, etc.

Will be interesting to say the least. No concrete projects planned for the trip. And plans to visit uk/rebecca didnt quite work out again this time. Sent mail to Dobrica in beograd about visiting but never heard back.

Jim Leftwich <jimleftwich@gmail.com>

Nov 2 (9 days ago)

to Tomislav

you should go to Hungary, get together with Marton Koppány and Gyorgi Galantai

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artpool\\_Art\\_Research\\_Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artpool_Art_Research_Center)

<http://www.artpool.hu/Defaulte.html#NEW>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gy%C3%B6rgy\\_Gal%C3%A1ntai](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gy%C3%B6rgy_Gal%C3%A1ntai)

<http://www.thing.net/~grist/ld/koppany/koppany.htm>

i don't know Galantai very well. we've touched based only a couple of times, not at all recently.  
but if i was going to be near there i would want to visit Artpool.

Tomislav Butkovic

Nov 2 (9 days ago)

to me

Good ideas i will check out the links and keep them in mind

2015-11-02 12:12 UTC-05:00, Jim Leftwich <jimleftwich@gmail.com>:

Jim Leftwich <jimleftwich@gmail.com>

Nov 2 (9 days ago)

to Tomislav

or you could go see Emilio Morandi in Ponte Nossa (northeastern Italy, Bergamo Province).  
i'd love to hang out with him.

and Viareggio, where Baroni lives, is about halfway between Ponte Nossa and Rome, where  
Marco Giovenale lives...

Tomislav Butkovic

Nov 2 (9 days ago)

to me

Baroni is an option I was thinking about. I contacted George Landyi in  
hungary too.

2015-11-02 12:43 UTC-05:00, Jim Leftwich <jimleftwich@gmail.com>:

|||||

autistic poetry, poetic device, škerović

Inbox

x

Tomislav Butković

Oct 27

to me

jim,

Could you help me understand 'autistic poetry'? I didn't know 'autistic' was a thing outside of people who have the conditon. Škerović has a book from 2010 titled what roughly translates to 'Children Embraced'. He describes it as 'stochastic, apeironistic, asian, autistic and minimalist poetry'.

I asked him what it was and he said "На аутистички начин. Рецимо, закуцан у једну форму и неспособан да прати било какву промену. То је само једно поетско средство." which roughly tranlates to "In an autistic manner. For example, sticking to a form and following any changes. It's just a poetic device."

Here's a poem he gave as an example:

Куга

Написао сам књигу  
За аутистичну децу  
Застала су  
Пред насловом  
Нисам се бринуо за дијагнозу  
Можда имају црве у глави?  
Такве их рађају  
А мајке плачу  
Објаснио сам уз помоћ семафора  
Проблем је у здрављу  
Буве  
Преносе карцином  
Електричним клицама

(google's version)

plague

He wrote a book

For autistic children

they stopped

Before heading

I did not care for diagnosis

You may have worms in your head?

Such bear them

A mother's cry

I explained with the help of traffic lights

The problem in the health of the

fleas

transmitted cancer

electric sprouts

Jim Leftwich <[jimleftwich@gmail.com](mailto:jimleftwich@gmail.com)>

Oct 28

to Tomislav

An "autistic poetry" would be an uncommunicative poetry, a poetry unwilling or unable to communicate, or a poetry that communicates but only with great difficulty. It might be repetitive in the extreme, or repetitive in an obsessive/compulsive way, producing endless permutations of a single sentence, phrase, line, syllable, letter, sound, shape, or mark. Or, it might be repetitive as a processual or procedural practice.

Although it could be used to describe a lot of contemporary poetry, and a lot of the poetry of the past hundred years or so, to my knowledge this term is not actually in general use among poets, critics or theorists of poetic practice.

Among so-called experimental poets much of the focus has shifted -- again, one could say "in recent years" or, equally "roughly since Mallarme" -- from poetic devices to poetic artifice. All of the traditional devices are still in play -- rhyme, rhythmic patterning, line-breaks, alliteration and assonance, etc -- but more often than not they tend to be foregrounded rather than concealed.

In 1904 William Butler Yeats could still make this argument:

A line will take us hours maybe;

Yet if it does not seem a moment's thought,

Our stitching and unstitching has been naught.

In 1985 Charles Bernstein would articulate a very different viewpoint (and reading it 30 years later we recognize it as the standard):

The reason it is difficult to talk about  
the meaning of a poem—in a way that doesn't seem  
frustratingly superficial or partial—is that by  
designating a text a poem, one suggests that its  
meanings are to be located in some “complex” be-  
yond an addition of devices & subject matters.  
A poetic reading can be given to any  
piece of writing; a “poem” may be understood as  
writing specifically designed to absorb, or inflate  
with, proactive—rather than reactive—styles of  
reading. “Artifice” is a measure of a poem’s  
intractability to being read as the sum of its  
devices & subject matters. In this sense,  
“artifice” is the contradiction of “realism”, with  
its insistence on presenting an unmediated  
(immediate) experience of facts, either of the  
“external” world of nature or the “internal” world  
of the mind; for example, naturalistic  
representation or phenomenological consciousness  
mapping. Facts in poetry are primarily  
factitious.

#### Artifice of Absorption

<http://epc.buffalo.edu/authors/bernstein/books/artifice/>

We are being invited by Bernstein to read the stitching and unstitching. Neither Yeats nor anyone else has ever actually been able to hide all of the work that went into the construction of a poem. A lot of us no longer think doing so is desirable.



from Doubt (1996)

#### THE AUTISTIC WORD

A two-voiced panic is freeing lyricism from the inanimate lyric. After sufficient writing, an essay bathed in the ladled ash of poetry, a token beryl without detente, though skeptical of the shore unraveled in pleasant expression by this acquiescent chronicle of broken lyricism, undoes a historical banality, but after all that in the course of a lyrical performance the material persistence of its blended rituals is not only strained but serrated, renewed as an epigone of suture and of coma. Withheld in the traversal of an edited aversion the two voices had each already a priority above the otherness of these programs. In a brief statement of tenets for the

festival of priority she engendered the moiré respite of enigma as expression, a project assumed as a deepening which shirks the shroud of poetry, edited by equation, renewed in a makeshift unbinding of the gift, her next purview a youthful offering of the tongue, self augmented by childish troubles, in spite of a bigoted materiality subject to heretical decree, and despite the germinal pronoun intrinsic to the making of profundity for a poem. When a society is not only inundated with life, but is also diluted by the aesthetic embers only it can engender, the aleatory invitation of the act and the teleology of theory stand beside each consequent moment with token oil and corrugated masks, bets pleasure Ariadne poses read in absent form, though her diverse entrances blemished forever in the qualia of her fist engage what was as this which happens in a writing fueled by the delicate lily, fierce attack of the vernal poet rigorous under the lucre of unrecognized muscle, almost too much of a delight, and hermetic in the extreme.

|||||

Second Wave Works of 'Blank Generation'  
Displayed for All to Ponder  
(July 25, 2002)

Back to Aldus Society In the News

By Bill Eichenberger, Dispatch Book Critic

A copy of Lost & Found Times -- titled that summer 33 -- is featured in "An American Avant Garde: Second Wave Exhibition" at Ohio State University.

The magazine opens with:

"They floated past the peas and corn, / the leader says, his voice turning / her cheek. Then she smiled and mouthed / for me for gas money or burned hoses, / of hungry lions."

Confused?

"The idea is to distract the reader from his or her preconceptions about what is supposed to be there," writer John M. Bennett explained, "so that the reader can see something new."

What's likely is that most of the writers included in the exhibit -- on display in the Main Library -- first distracted themselves.

"There are many ways," he said: "You can write when you're exhausted. You can write in a noisy environment. . . . Some writers take drugs."

Bennett, the creator of Lost & Found Times and the content provider for a Web site of "visual poems," curated the "Second Wave" exhibit and organized a two-day "Avant Garde Symposium" on the OSU campus.

His suggestion for the uninitiated: Don't bother to look for "meaning" -- at least not in the traditional sense.

"Some of the cleverest stuff looks like it has meaning," he said, "but that's only an illusion. They (avant-garde writers) are playing a trick on you. The surface meaning may be there, but that's not what the piece is really about."

His "first wave" included William S. Burroughs, Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg and other so-called beat writers; and was featured last year in an OSU exhibition called "An American Avant Garde: First Wave."

Bennett has dubbed the second wave "the blank generation," in part because of the relative anonymity of its members.

Not even the biggest names -- Richard Kostelanetz, say, or Jim Leftwich or Sheila E. Murphy -- are as well-known as any of the most famous beats.

"Allen Ginsberg was a remarkable hustler and promoter of his friends," Bennett said. "So the beats were more well-known. Jack Kerouac was accessible in a way that most avant-garde writers today aren't. And the culture was ready in the 1950s and 1960s for the beats."

Most writers in the second wave have shunned mass appeal and avoided academia. Many have day jobs, in areas ranging from chemistry to pizza delivery.

"What was happening in universities, what was going on in the culture at large, simply didn't interest the second wave," Bennett said. "So individual artists went off and did it themselves, entirely on their own, making what they couldn't find anywhere else."

By its nature, the avant-garde operates largely, if not exclusively, outside the mainstream.

Yet it has a traceable history, according to Bennett.

"What usually happens is, mainstream artists become aware of the avant-garde and begin to incorporate avant-garde ideas into their own work. Mainstream artists dilute, adapt, modify and commodify ideas that originated with the avant-garde."

While writers such as Rimbaud and James Joyce enjoy mainstream popularity, Bennett said, the “continuous history of the avant-garde” is found in the works of lesser-known proponents of experimentalism, including 19th-century French poet Compte de Lautreamont or 20th-century Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro.

The “Second Wave” exhibit features mail art (works sent through the mail), e-mail art, visual poetry (combinations of words and images), concrete poetry (words as images) and other forms.

Presentations will be made by PowerPoint, on CD-ROM, in music and through images accompanied by spoken text -- what Dick Higgins, a primary figure in the avant-garde Fluxus movement, would have called “intermedia.”

The second wave refers to a loose assembly, hardly an organized movement, of like-minded writers.

Even to call it the second wave or the blank generation is to take liberties with the facts.

Still, the writers in the exhibit might have at least one thing in common:

“It’s the conception of language as a part of the human body and a part of the complete human experience,” Bennett said. “It’s a belief that language is a part of the hard wiring of the human mind and the view that language is not separate from the body.”

|||||

Allan Revich  
FLUXLIST  
December 26, 2014 · Toronto, Canada · Edited

Let's talk about Fluxus:  
Or, What I Learned That Fluxus Was/Is/Isn't/Might be/Should be/Could be

We could start with Dada. Some people have called Fluxus "neodada". Some have called contemporary Fluxus neodada. Those people are wrong. So we won't start with Dada.

Let's start instead with John Cage. John Cage was not a Fluxus artist, and he had nothing directly to do with the founding of Fluxus. But he had one really cool idea that made Fluxus (and most art of every kind after his idea) possible. Cage realized that music (he was a composer) was all just sound waves in air. It wasn't flutes, or pianos, or violins, or treble clefs and bass

clefs, or 4/4 time or 3/4 time. It was just waves moving through the atmosphere at frequencies audible to the human ear. Most music was composed so that the composer or musician's organization of the sound waves would bring pleasure to most of the composer/musician's cultural contemporaries. But it didn't have to. A composer, or musician, or artist could organize sound waves in whatever way they wanted, and they could use whatever tools they wanted to, to organize those sound waves. It wasn't a great leap from there to the idea that visual art was subject to the same thinking. All visual art consisted of marks and forms, organized on surfaces or in space, and any artist could choose how to organize their marks and forms, and what tools to use to do so.

In the early 1960s a group of artists, led mostly by George Maciunas and Dick Higgins coalesced around the idea of Intermedia. The idea that art created in the spaces in which different media intersect would be more interesting than art confined to any single medium. George organized the first ever Fluxus Festival in Wiesbaden, Germany in 1962. For more than a decade after that ,the core group of artists were bound together by a relatively held-in-common artistic vision. The first manifesto was published by Maciunas, and subsequent manifestos of varying degrees of influence were published subsequently. The salient point is that, at least until the death of Maciunas in 1978, the IDEA of Fluxus and the PEOPLE of Fluxus were one and the same.

Then things get complicated...

As long as the idea and the people were one and the same, nobody had to think much about what would happen to the idea, once the people moved on to other things, places, or states-of-being. But Fluxus turned out to be a pretty darned good idea, and it was an especially good idea for artists that were either interested in working in intermedia, and artists who were not particularly interested in participating in the machinations of the Art World and its hyperactive commercialism, power politics, and money games.

Inevitably, a new cohort of artists emerged who had either loose affiliations, or no affiliation with the original group of Fluxus artists, but were deeply committed to the Fluxus ideas and ideals. Many of these artists consider their association to the Fluxus ideas to be deep enough to refer to themselves as "Fluxus artists". These artists often point to statements by the original Fluxus artists, that make it very clear that they never considered Fluxus to be an art movement in the traditional art-historical sense, or as a "closed group" of artists whose participation in Fluxus required consent. In the words of Fluxus artist and historian, Ken Friedman,

"Dick [Higgins] explicitly rejected a notion that limited Fluxus to a specific group of people who came together at a specific time and place. Dick wrote, "Fluxus is not a moment in history, or an art movement. Fluxus is a way of doing things, a tradition, and a way of life and death."

["http://www.iade.pt/designist/issues/001\\_07.html"](http://www.iade.pt/designist/issues/001_07.html)

Sadly, with the passage of time, it seems that some of the early Fluxus artists, perhaps feeling insecure about their own art-historical legacies, have taken to rewriting history: Doing so in a way that is simultaneously more favourable to the seriously moneyed art collector class, and to their perceived legacies. Seems, it turns out, that being part of an important art history movement pays higher dividends, than being an artist in the dwindling dusk of a lifetime, with nothing of consequence to show besides those spring days. In turn, this has led to a rather pathetic withdraw of support for the very artists most interested in preserving and honoring the legacy and work of the founding group of Fluxus artists.

Personally, I believe that the work and ideas of the leading Fluxus artists of the 1960s will easily withstand the tests of time. The artists who were footnotes then, will still be footnotes later. I also believe that the best way to be more than a footnote, would be for the surviving early Fluxus artists to embrace and participate in the new Fluxfests with the current generation of Fluxus artists. And those of us in that current generation, what of our artistic legacy? Most of us are too busy creating interesting, new, Fluxus artworks to worry about it!

PS: A HUGE shoutout to Yoko Ono is due here. Not only was she one of the most interesting and influential original Fluxus artists but she continues to support Fluxus Art and artists past, present, and future.



Ken Friedman  
Twelve Fluxus Ideas

## 1. The Fluxus Idea, 1962-2007

### 1.1 The birth of Fluxus, more or less

Forty-five years ago, the first organized Fluxus festival took place in Wiesbaden, Germany. This generally calls for anniversary celebrations on the decade – the mid-point between forty and fifty offers a good moment for reflection, and an opportunity to reflect on the relation between Fluxus and design.

Emmett Williams once wrote, “Fluxus is what Fluxus does – but no one knows whodunit.” This concise description makes two radical statements. The statement that no one knows “who done” Fluxus rejects the idea of Fluxus as a specific group of people. It identifies Fluxus with a frame of action and defines Fluxus as a cumulative, aggregate of Fluxus activities over the past

forty-five years. I never asked Emmett what he thought of this interpretation of his playful conundrum, so I don't know whether he would have agreed with me. Dick Higgins did.

Dick explicitly rejected a notion that limited Fluxus to a specific group of people who came together at a specific time and place. Dick wrote, "Fluxus is not a moment in history, or an art movement. Fluxus is a way of doing things, a tradition, and a way of life and death."

For Dick, for George Maciunas, and for me, Fluxus is more valuable as an idea and a potential for social change than as a specific group of people or a collection of objects.

As I see it, Fluxus was a laboratory. The research program of the Fluxus laboratory is characterized by twelve ideas:

globalism,  
the unity of art and life,  
intermedia,  
experimentalism,  
chance,  
playfulness,  
simplicity,  
implicativeness,  
exemplativism,  
specificity,  
presence in time, and  
musicality.

## 1.2 Ideas and Issues

The Fluxus idea is distinct from the specific group of people. The Fluxus idea existed long before the specific group of people identified with Fluxus....



Chris Wells

A video about a envelope of wonderful things I received from Jim Leftwich.

Like · Comment · Turn Off Notifications · Share · 17 hrs

John M. Bennett, Chris Bidle, Tommasina Bianca Squadrato and 5 others like this.

3 shares

## Comments

Chris Wells Some items did not make their way into the video, so I took a picture. There are some trashpo "readymades" here and some small sayings printed on little rectangles of paper that remind me of fortunes.

Unlike · Reply · 1 · 17 hours ago

Josh Hanson I kinda want all of my internet friends to post videos of them talking.

Like · Reply · 2 · 17 hours ago

Chris Wells Hopefully I sounded reasonably intelligent, if somewhat incoherent.

Like · Reply · 2 · 16 hours ago

Write a reply...

Jim Leftwich thank you Chris, this video is a wonderful surprise -- much more fun than a blog text -- thanks

Like · Reply · 2 · 16 hours ago

Jim Leftwich one note: the stapled pieces are TLPs -- tacky little pamphlets. a tlp is usually distributed as an uncut booklet. so, with the ones you have, slice along the crease at the top and you will wind up with little 8-page booklets (made from single sheets of copy paper, folded in half twice).

Like · Reply · 2 · 16 hours ago

Chris Wells I almost did that. I was unfamiliar with this convention of TLPs, never having received one before.

Like · Reply · 16 hours ago

Jim Leftwich my response was very similar to yours when i got my first one in the mail, from John, about 20 years ago -- i love them -- my micropress is called TLPress, and consists almost entirely of tlps.

Like · Reply · 1 · 16 hours ago

Write a reply...

Tiffany Scobey Watched the entire video because my brother is brilliant and kind. I thoroughly enjoy just listening to him.

Like · Reply · 2 · 7 hours ago

John M. Bennett have been able to watch a few bits of this, but it keeps shutting down, no idea why

Like · Reply · 5 hours ago

Chris Wells That's strange. Maybe a browser/plugin/Facebook problem? I may try uploading it somewhere else to see if it works better.

Like · Reply · 5 hours ago

Write a reply...

John M. Bennett yeah i shared it to my own page and was able to watch - very cool - as Jim sez, those TLPs shpould have (or not) the tops cut, so you can open them. All books used to be published unopened that way - heh!

Like · Reply · 1 · 5 hours ago

Chris Wells I think I remember that a copy of Melville's 'Clarel' sat in some big public library for 50 years "with its pages uncut." So that was meant literally. Cool!

Like · Reply · 4 hours ago

Write a reply...

Clau Di Zi This is so cool!!! Thanks for sharing!!!

|||||

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11.12.2015

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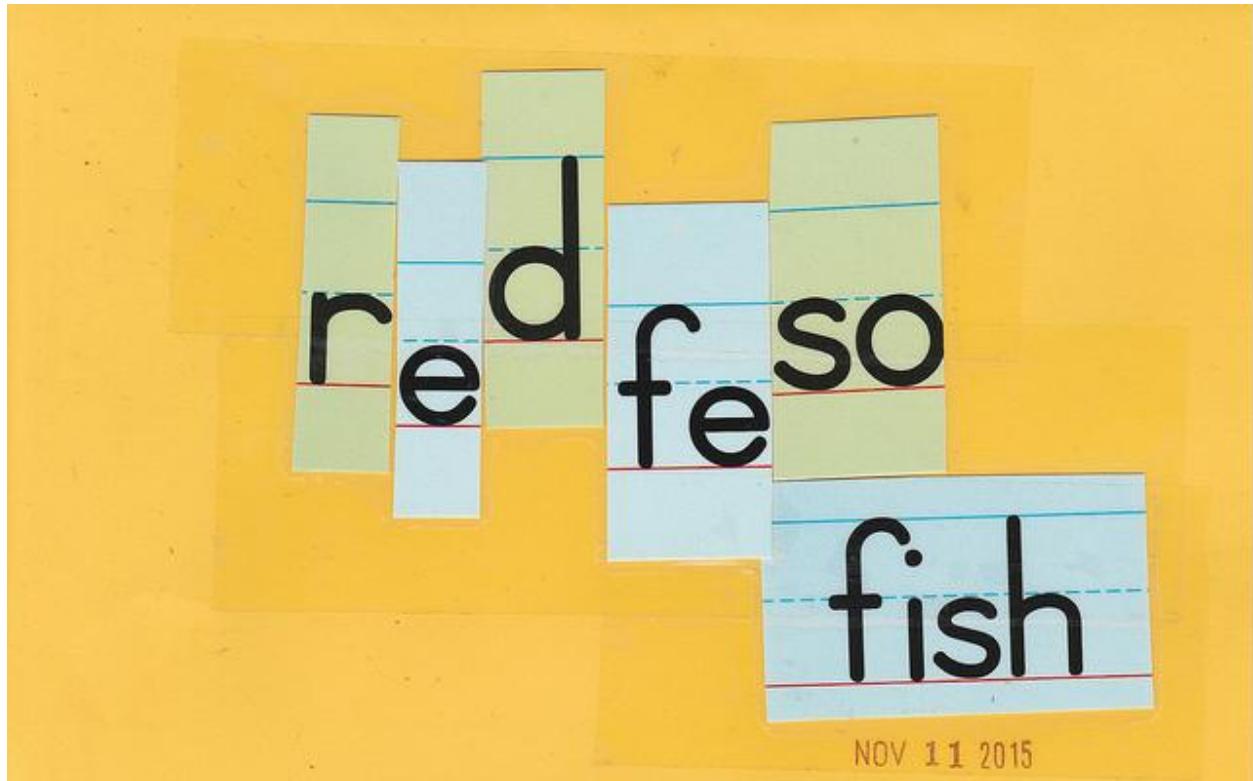
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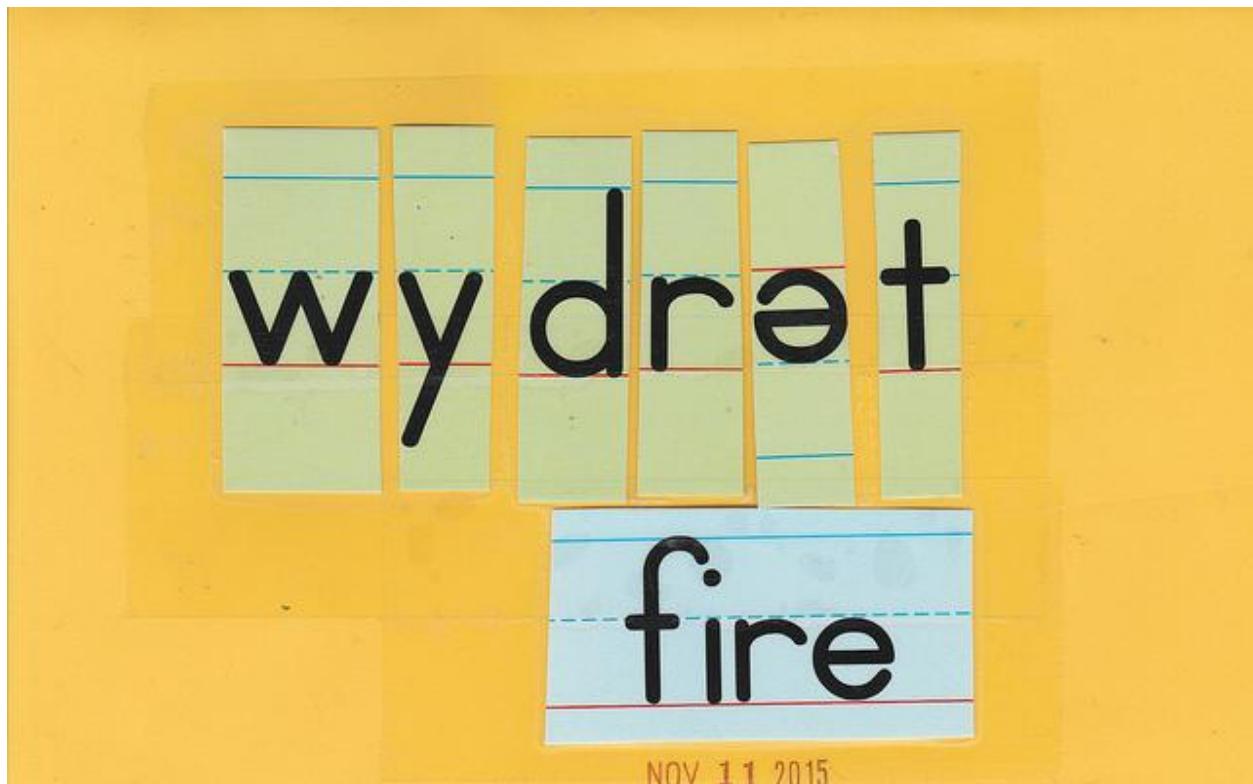
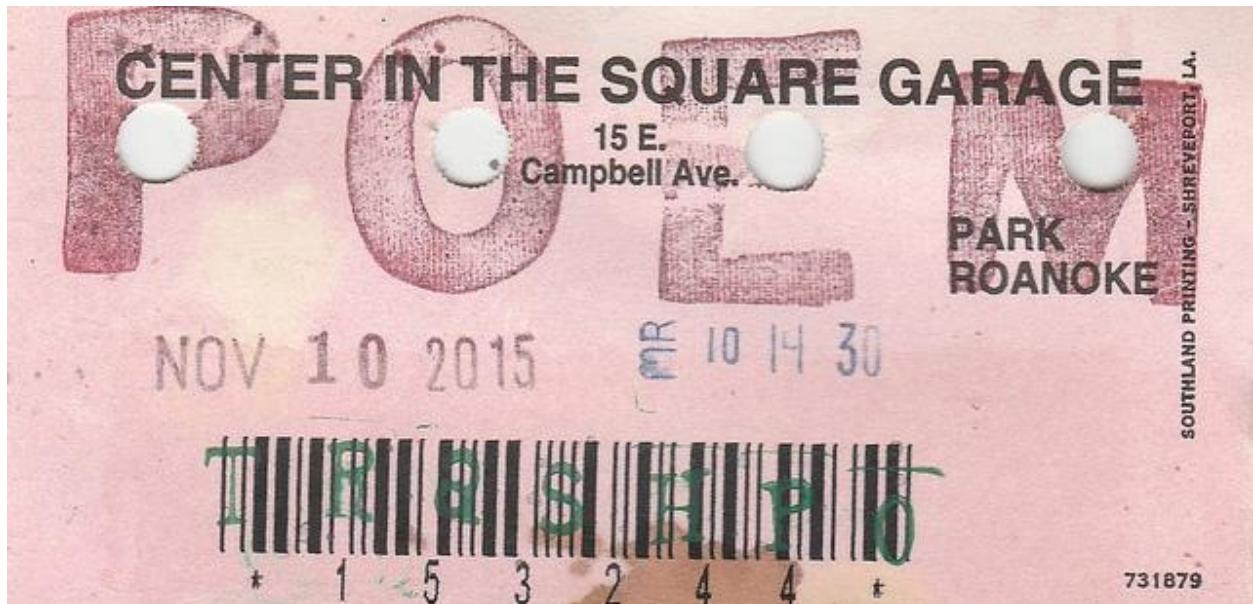
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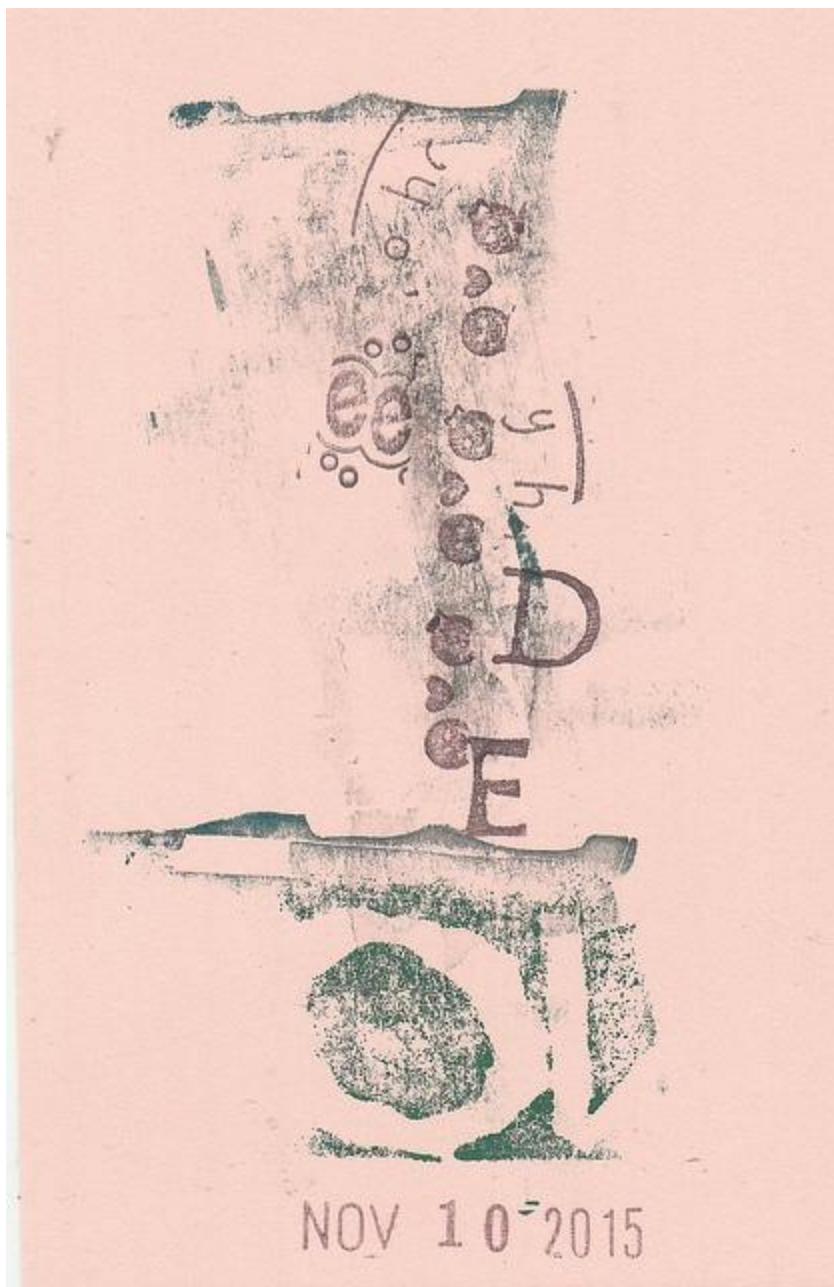
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